

TESTIMONY OF JOSEPH D. ROBERTS
Publisher, former State Legislator and former
Public Relations Officer of the U. S. Army

MR. HOUSTON: Will Mr. Roberts take the stand?

JOSEPH D. ROBERTS, after being first duly sworn was examined and testified as follows:

MR. HOUSTON: Mr. Roberts, did you hear the instructions given the previous witness as to speaking audibly?

Will you please state your name?

MR. ROBERTS: Joseph D. Roberts.

MR. HOUSTON: Are you a resident of the City of Seattle, Mr. Roberts?

MR. ROBERTS: I am.

MR. HOUSTON: How long have you been such a resident?

MR. ROBERTS: 35 years.

MR. HOUSTON: What is your occupation, Mr. Roberts?

MR. ROBERTS: I'm a publisher.

MR. HOUSTON: You're a former member of the Legislature, are you not?

MR. ROBERTS: That is right.

MR. HOUSTON: What years were you in the Legislature?

MR. ROBERTS: From 1933 until 1942—or 1941.

MR. HOUSTON: And were you in the House or in the Senate?

MR. ROBERTS: I was in the House for a while and then in the Senate for a couple of terms.

MR. HOUSTON: Now, were you an officer in the Army of the United States during the last World War?

MR. ROBERTS: Yes, sir.

MR. HOUSTON: Were you stationed at Fort Lewis, Washington?

MR. ROBERTS: Yes, sir, I was, in 1941. Right after the session of the Senate adjourned in March, 1941, I went on active duty with the Army.

MR. HOUSTON: Now did you have occasion to attend any of the shows of the Repertory Playhouse?

MR. ROBERTS: The Repertory Playhouse brought some of their actors and actresses down to Fort Lewis to present some plays for the soldiers there. As Public Relations Officer on the staff of Colonel Ralph Glass, I went to witness their plays.

Indoctrinated Soldiers in Communism

MR. HOUSTON: You went to witness their plays, and what kind of plays had they brought down there?

MR. ROBERTS: Well, that was quite a while ago. That was in 1941; this is 1948, but as nearly as I can remember they were plays that were—that carried a message that was rather leftish, but I wasn't particularly concerned with the plays themselves, and I don't think that the other officers at the Post, or the soldiers, were either. I think that the main thing they were concerned with was the propaganda that the actors and actresses from the Repertory Playhouse gave to the soldiers before the performances, between acts and after the performances. **They talked to the soldiers, and they tried to indoctrinate them with Communism.**

MR. HOUSTON: Did the soldiers come and complain to you of the activities of these people?

MR. ROBERTS: Many of the soldiers came to me and told me that they thought something should be done about it. I remember there were many officers' wives who had attended these plays came to me and they were very adamant and said that they thought it was terribly wrong to be indoctrinating these soldiers with this foreign ideology, when we should be indoctrinating them with patriotism because they were about to go to war to fight for this country.

MR. HOUSTON: Now, did you report your findings to your commanding officer?

MR. ROBERTS: I went to Colonel Glass and reported to him exactly what I had seen and what the others had seen, and I relayed their comments to the Commander.

MR. HOUSTON: Now where were these plays being given?

MR. ROBERTS: At first they presented them, as I remember, right on the reservation, at the—either the Hostess House, or the Red Cross—I don't remember exactly at which one of those places, but later they presented their plays at a little theatre near American Lake, which was a matter of a few miles from the Fort Lewis reservation.

Repertory Playhouse Actors Banned from Post

MR. HOUSTON: Now, did these soldiers that complained about these different things name any particular names?

MR. ROBERTS: **Yes, they did. They mentioned the names of Burton James and his wife and Mr. Al Ottenheimer.**

MR. HOUSTON: As the ones that were the leaders.

MR. ROBERTS: The leaders.

MR. HOUSTON: Now, did Colonel Glass or the Army do anything about this activity?

MR. ROBERTS: Yes, sir. Colonel Glass told me to kick them off the post, which I did. When you're in the Army you take orders. It was a pleasure, though.

MR. HOUSTON: And the Army banned them from giving plays there—

MR. ROBERTS: That is right.

MR. HOUSTON: —as a result of that.

MR. HOUSTON: Mr. Chairman, I am through with this witness and suggest that he be excused of the subpoena with the thanks of the committee for his—

CHAIRMAN CANWELL: I would like to just ask one question and this is for the records.

You are testifying as a civilian and not as a member of the military service at present.

MR. ROBERTS: That is right.

CHAIRMAN CANWELL: You may be excused and thank you for appearing.

MR. ROBERTS: Thank you, very much.

(Witness Excused)

MR. HOUSTON: You are Mr. John W. Whipple, Assistant Chief Investigator for the Washington State Un-American Activities Committee, are you not, Mr. Whipple?

MR. WHIPPLE: I am.

MR. HOUSTON: And you have previously been in the box and been sworn.

MR. WHIPPLE: I have.

Affidavit of Col. Ralph R. Glass, Retired

MR. HOUSTON: What is your purpose in taking the witness stand at this time?

MR. WHIPPLE: I would like to present to the committee at this time—at this time—an affidavit of Colonel Ralph R. Glass, a resident of the State of California, concerning whom it is impossible for him to be here to testify at this hearing.

AFFIDAVIT

STATE OF CALIFORNIA }
COUNTY OF ALAMEDA } ss.

Ralph R. Glass, of lawful age, being first duly sworn on oath, deposes and says:

My name is Ralph R. Glass, and I am a Colonel, United States Army retired, and at the present time living at 1019 Ardmore Avenue, Oakland 10, California.

During 1941 I was Post Commander at Fort Lewis, Washington. At that time Joseph D. Roberts was my Recreation Officer. I remember that Mr. and Mrs. James and others took a theatre group from the Seattle Repertory Playhouse to Fort Lewis to present plays on the Post. I recall that Mr. Roberts informed me that the plays were subversive propaganda in substance and that they should not be allowed to present plays of that type before the men. I personally did not see the plays. Due to the information given to me by Mr. Roberts I instructed Mr. Roberts to inform the Jameses that there were no more open dates available for them to present plays on the Post. I believe these instructions were carried out by Mr. Roberts.

I have read the above affidavit consisting of one page and thoroughly understand the matters and things contained therein. These statements are made by me of my own free will and accord, without promise of remuneration or reward of any nature and without duress or threat of violence. To the best of my recollection the above statements are correct.

/s/ Ralph R. Glass
Ralph R. Glass

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to this 9th day of June, 1948, before me.

/s/ C. A. Larson
Notary Public in and for
the State of California.

MR. HOUSTON: Phillip H. Davis.

MR. HOUSTON: Mr. Chairman, I'm just informed that the witness is outside parading in the picket line. Do you suggest we send a patrolman out and get him?

CHAIRMAN CANWELL: I suggest that a patrolman go out and advise Mr. Davis that he is called for appearance on the witness stand; he was required to remain in attendance but we will go that far to help him to find his way here and it will be my suggestion that we will be at ease for about two minutes. Seems to be some difficulty in locating Mr. Davis. He is required to be in attendance; however, we will call him again in a few minutes and he should be here at that time. Can you proceed with another witness at this time?

TESTIMONY OF PROF. MELVILLE JACOBS Dept. of Anthropology, University of Washington

MR. HOUSTON: Melville Jacobs. Is your counsel here, Dr. Jacobs.

DR. JACOBS: Yes, it is.

MELVILLE JACOBS, called as a witness, after being duly sworn was examined and testified as follows:

MR. HOUSTON: And you wish the record to show that Mr. Henry is acting as your counsel at this occasion.

DR. JACOBS: Yes, sir.

MR. HOUSTON: You have heard our instructions, have you not, to the other witnesses, Dr. Jacobs?

DR. JACOBS: Yes, Mr. Houston, go ahead.

MR. HOUSTON: It's correct to call you Doctor, isn't it?

DR. JACOBS: Yes.

MR. HOUSTON: Will you please state your name?

DR. JACOBS: Melville Jacobs.

MR. HOUSTON: Are you a resident of the city of Seattle?

DR. JACOBS: Yes, sir.

MR. HOUSTON: How long have you lived in the city of Seattle?

DR. JACOBS: My appointment to the University was in January, 1928, and immediately afterwards I went on a field expedition and made my first residence here in the third quarter of that year. That would be, I suppose, the beginning of April, 1928.

MR. HOUSTON: And have you taught at the University ever since then?

DR. JACOBS: Yes, except for quite a number of sessions when I was on leave of absence to conduct field researches or for one or another purpose.

Admits Communist Party Membership

MR. HOUSTON: Dr. Jacobs, I will ask you if you are, or ever have been, a member of the Communist Party.

DR. JACOBS: I was a member of the Communist Party but I am not now.

MR. HOUSTON: When did you join the Communist Party, Doctor?

DR. JACOBS: When?

MR. HOUSTON: Yes.

DR. JACOBS: I'm not clear, because it's so long ago, of the precise date. It could have been as early as '35. I prefer or think rather that the probabilities are somewhat higher than it was in early '36, but I prefer to let it go in that vague way because it is long ago and I've been so busy and it just doesn't fit in as a definite point, sir, anywhere.

MR. HOUSTON: Now, when did you get out of the Communist Party, Doctor?

DR. JACOBS: That was an extremely gradual process in my own mind and as far as any formal disaffiliation is concerned, there again I feel that I cannot place it more precisely than possibly at the end of '45, possibly in the beginning of '46, somewhere along in that vague period there were many months, many, many months, that were—one could say, the end occurred. Simply because I was not attending or participating in any way and I simply just was out of the picture, just dropping by the wayside.